Amendments to the Abstract:

Please delete the Abstract of the Disclosure in its entirety and substitute the following replacement Abstract therefor:

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Image data by which an image is represented with a plurality of pixels is acquired. A portion of the image data characterizing an artificial image is extracted from the image represented by the acquired image data in an artificial-image extracting procedure. The prescribed image processing is performed by excluding the image data of the portion extracted from the acquired image data in the artificial-image extracting procedure. In this manner, the image processing can be performed without being affected by the artificial image.